



RURAL DISTRICT OF MORPETH.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
FOR 1943.

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To the Chairman and Members of the Morpeth Rural District Council.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I beg to present to you the Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health concerning the health and sanitary circumstances of the Rural District in 1943.

Owing to the tragic and unexpected death of Dr. Angus it has fallen to my lot to prepare and produce this report of work for which he was responsible and which was carried out under his inspiration and guidance. His passing is a great loss to the Public Health services in this district and is deeply regretted by all who worked with him and were thus in a position to appreciate his profound knowledge and wide experience of Public Health work and medical practice generally.

In accordance with the instructions of the Ministry of Health I have followed closely the plan of previous reports as regards brevity, the limitation of references and the suppression of certain figures of population, etc.

There is no outstanding departure from the routine of the previous year to report.

Scabies and other verminous conditions continued to occupy much attention and their treatment involved the expenditure of much time and energy both on the part of your Medical Officers and of the staffs at the various cleansing stations.

Diphtheria immunisation was again resumed during the year in an effort to maintain the immunity of the school and pre-school population against diphtheria. The figures of 94.5% for school children and 72.8% for pre-school children are satisfactory.

On the instructions of the Ministry of Health special mention is made of the water supplies in the district as it is the aim of the Government to have water laid on in every house as soon as is practicable after the war.

I am,

Your obedient Servant,

C.B. MCGREGOR,

Medical Officer of Health.

November, 1944.



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RURAL DISTRICT OF MORPETH.

OFFICERS OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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Assistant Medical Officer of Health	Catherine B. McGregor, M.B., CH.B., D.P.H.
Sanitary) Housing) Inspector Meat) Senior	Mr. T.T. Watson, R.S.I. & S.I.J.B. Certs. Meat Inspectors Certs.
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RURAL DISTRICT OF MORPETH.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
FOR 1943.

SECTION A.

Statistics and Social Conditions of the Area.

Area, in acres - 79,193.

Registrar General's estimate of
Resident population mid 1942 ..Suppressed. M. of H.
Circular 2601.

Rateable value - £65,665.

One penny rate produces - £265.

Number of inhabited houses (end of 1942) - Suppressed
M. of H. circular 2601.

Vital Statistics.

Birth Rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population - 18.23

Still birth Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births - 20.55

Death Rate per 1,000 of the population - 10.39

Deaths from puerperal causes :- (headings 29 and 30 of the Registrar
General's short list) -

	Death Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births.
No. 29 Puerperal sepsis	Nil
No. 30 Other maternal causes .	3.42

Death Rate of infants under one year of age:-

All infants per 1,000 live births	27.97
Legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate live births....	29.63
Illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births	Nil.

Deaths from Cancer (all ages).....	26
Deaths from Measles (all ages).....	Nil
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages).....	1
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 years).....	1

INFANTILE MORTALITY - 1943.

Causes of death.	Total					Total				
	Und 1 wk	1-2 wks	2-3 wks	3-4 wks	under 1 mth	1-3 mths	3-6 mths	6-9 mths	9-12 mths	under 1 yr.
Pneumonia	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Prematurity	3	1	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	4
Bronchitis	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Gastro-enteritis	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Whooping Cough	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>8</u>

SECTION B.

General Provision of Health Services for the Area.

LABORATORY FACILITIES.

Laboratory facilities are obtained at the County Laboratory Newburn. The extent to which the facilities have been utilized is shown below:

Specimens sent in by.	Specimen.	Pos.	Neg.	Total.
C.C.T.O.	Sputa for tubercle.	3	18	21
Medical Practitioners.	do.	3	32	35
M.O.H.	Swabs for C.diphtheriae.	2	10	12
Medical Practitioners.	do.	5	99	104
M.O.H.	Virulence test for C.diphtheriae.	2	-	2
M.O.H.	Swabs for Haemolytic Streptococcus	1	7	8
Medical Practitioners.	do.	30	47	77
Medical Practitioners.	Swabs for Vincents Angina.	-	4	4
Medical Practitioners.	Faeces for enteric fever.	1	4	5
M.O.H.	Blood for enteric fever.	-	4	4
Medical Practitioners.	do.	-	3	3
Sanitary Inspector, Ashington U.D.C.	Artificial Cream for Organisms.	-	4	4
Medical Practitioners.	Miscellaneous.	4	-	4

AMBULANCE FACILITIES.

These services remain as before.

NURSING IN THE HOME.

No change. Number of district nurses - 10, and stationed as previously reported.

HOSPITALS.

None, except St. Andrew's Colony, an institution belonging to the Committee for Mental Deficiency of the N.C.C.

SECTION C.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

WATER.

The main sources of the water supplies to the various communities and villages remain as before.

At Broomhill, a marked improvement in the water supply was noted, consequent upon the installation of pumping plant at Morwick Reservoir by the Broomhill Colliery Company, the proprietors of the undertaking.

The village water supply at Netherwitton was improved during the year.

The source of the Chevington Crescent water supply was cleaned up and an improvement in the quality of the water was effected.

During the year water services were laid into various houses as follows:-

Pegswood	2
Old Moor	2
Mitford	7
Chibburn	2
East Febrother	1
Longhorsley	<u>1</u>

Total .. 15

Sixty samples of water have been taken and submitted to the County Laboratory, High Street, Newburn, for bacteriological examination, from many sources in the district.

The bacteriological results are attached.

Water Samples collected during 1944.

Date.	Place of Collection.	No. of colonies per ml.		Coli. aerogenes per 100 ml.
		37°C	22°C.	
25/1/43.	Standpipe, Chevington Crescent.	-	-	8.
25/1/43.	Cloakroom, Red Row Infant School.	-	-	3.
31/3/43.	Gladstone's Bldgs. Longhorsley.	-	-	3.
31/3/43.	West Cottages " "	-	-	Nil.
13/4/43.	Standpipe, Village Green, "	-	-	Nil.
13/4/43.	Jermy's West Thirston Villages.	-	-	Nil.
3/5/43.	Cold Tap, Ellington Colliery Baths.	-	-	90.
3/5/43.	Hot Tap, " " "	-	-	50.
3/5/43.	Council's Mains. " " "	-	-	Nil.
3/5/43.	Condensed Water. " " "	-	-	Nil.
11/5/43.	Standpipe, Chevington Crescent.	-	-	35.
11/5/43.	Standpipe, Netherwitton Village.	-	-	Nil.
18/5/43.	Ellington Burn near Todds Farm.	-	-	180 plus.
25/5/43.	School Yard. Cambo.	-	-	Nil.
25/5/43.	Pump at Close Houses, Cambo.	-	-	Nil.
25/5/43.	Tap at Cottages, Scots Gap.	-	-	Nil.
8/6/43.	Schoolyard, Tritlington, Morpeth.	-	-	Nil.
8/6/43.	West End, Chevington Crescent.	-	-	160.
15/6/43.	Spring supply, Cockle Park.	-	-	8.
15/6/43.	Tap, Shelley Farm, Netherwitton.	-	-	25.
22/6/43.	Tap in Dairy, Gubeon Farm, Morpeth.	-	-	17.
22/6/43.	Tap, Gubeon Farm House.	-	-	11.
29/6/43.	Spring supply, Cockle Park.	-	-	Nil.
29/6/43.	Standpipe, Chevington Crescent.	-	-	180 plus.
13/7/43.	Farmhouse, Abshiels, Stanton.	-	-	180 plus.
13/7/43.	Shelly Farm, Netherwitton.	-	-	160.
13/7/43.	Spring supply, Cockle Park.	-	-	2.
13/7/43.	Standpipe, West End Chev. Crescent.	-	-	180 plus.
20/7/43.	House Tap, West Thirston, Felton.	-	-	Nil.
20/7/43.	Standpipe near school, Longhorsley.	-	-	Nil.
20/7/43.	Spring, Gladstone's Bldgs. "	-	-	20.
20/7/43.	Cloakroom, Netherwitton School.	-	-	Nil.
27/7/43.	Standpipe, West End, Chev. Crescent.	-	-	180 plus.
3/8/43.	Manor House, Mitford, Morpeth.	-	-	Nil.
3/8/43.	Coldside Farm, Morpeth.	-	-	Nil.
16/8/43.	Whitefield Farm, Red Row.	-	-	25.
16/8/43.	Spring South side of Bridge, Lightwater. Mitford.	-	-	Nil.
24/8/43.	Tap outside, North Side Cottages, Meldon.	-	-	35.
24/8/43.	Standpipe, Cambo.	-	-	1.
7/9/43.	Standpipe, West Chev. Crescent.	-	-	17.
6/10/43.	Standpipe, W. End Chev. Crescent.	-	-	50.
6/10/43.	Standpipe, Whitefield Farm, Red Row.	-	-	5.

cont.

18/10/43. School Tap, Hartburn, Morpeth.	-	-	Nil.
18/10/43. Tap in Glebe Farm yard, Hartburn.	-	-	Nil.
18/10/43. Well, Middleton Village, Morpeth.	-	-	90.
18/10/43. Tap at Hotel, Middleton, Morpeth.	-	-	180 plus.
26/10/43. Standpipe W. End Chev. Crescent.	-	-	25.
26/10/43. Chevington Crescent Supply.	-	-	25.
26/10/43. Collecting tank Chevington Wood.	-	-	17.
26/10/43. Collecting tank 200 yards East of Chevington Wood.	-	-	13.
2/11/43. Standpipe near school, Longhirsley.	-	-	13.
2/11/43. Standpipe in dairy at Hemelspeth farm, Thirston.	-	-	Nil.
7/11/43. Tap, Glebe Farm, Hartburn.	-	-	Nil.
7/11/43. Tap, North Side Cotts, Meldon.	-	-	17.
9/11/43. 2, Ellis Square, Pegswood.	-	-	Nil.
9/11/43. Lough Hse Cottage, Benridge.	-	-	Nil.
16/11/43. Standpipe, Whitefield Farm, Chev.	-	-	90.
16/11/43. Well, Estate Cottages, Widdrington.	-	-	180 plus.
16/11/43. Spring above Hotel, Middleton Vill.	-	-	180 plus.
16/11/43. " " " " "	-	-	180 plus.

WATER SUPPLIES.

There are many distinct and separate water supplies in the Morpeth Rural District. The Eastern part of the district which is chiefly industrial, is supplied by water from waterworks. The water is bought in bulk from other authorities,

The western part of the district, which is chiefly agricultural, has many separate water supplies, owned by different persons and the larger portion of the population derive the water supplies from wells and springs. Several farms in this district obtain supplies of water in return for wayleaves granted by water companies. Some of the supplies are good, but in many cases the supplies leave much to be desired.

During the year a survey was carried out to investigate the water supplies of every house in the district. The results obtained are set out as follows:

Number of houses under pressure supply is	3,036
Within 100 yards	942
Over 100 yards	10
On wells and springs	320

DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.

The following works have been undertaken during the year:-

New drains and septic tank, Hepscott.
New drains and septic tank, West Benridge.
New drains and septic tank, Tranwell.
New drains connected to Council's sewer, Ellington Mill and Cottage.

Diversion of drainage from cesspit to main drain at Broomhill Farm.
 Improved drainage, Aged Miner's Homes, East Chevington.
 Further improved sanitary conveniences, Primrose Hall, Red Row.
 New drains and septic tank, High Highlaws Farm.
 Improved drainage, North East Houses Farm.
 New drainage and septic tank, East Fenrother Farm.
 New drainage and septic tank, Linden Lane Cottage.
 Choked drains and sinks cleared - 21.

CLOSET ACCOMMODATION.

Conversions to the Water Carriage system took place at:-

Ellington Mill	2
Hepscott	1
Tranwell	1
West Benridge	2
Lough House Cottage	1
Longhirst	1
Linden Lane Cottage	1
Priestbridge Road House	1
Farm Cottage, West Chevington Farm	1
House at Swarland Tce., Red Row	1
Defective W.Cs. repaired	2

PUBLIC CLEANSING.

The public cleansing in the Parishes of West and East Chevington is carried out by direct Labour, in the manner indicated in the previous report, and the method has given undoubted satisfaction.

The scavenging in the Parishes of Hepscott, Pegswood, Longhirst, Ulgham, Widdrington, Ellington, Lynemouth, Cresswell and Longhorsley is carried out by contract.

A scavenging Motor vehicle is now on order and next year the work in the Parishes of Ellington, Lynemouth and Hepscott will be carried out by direct labour.

No. of ash bins provided.	35.
No. of ash pits abolished.	3.
No. of improperly used ash pits.	5.
Sinks provided.	4.
Gullies provided.	2.

SHOPS.

No action has been found necessary.

CAMPING SITES.

No change from previous report.

MOVABLE DWELLINGS.

- (1) Licences granted to station movable dwellings etc., 4.
- (2) Licences renewed to station movable dwellings etc., 4.

SMOKE ABATEMENT.

No complaints or nuisances arising from the pollution of the atmosphere from smoke have been detected or received during the year.

SWIMMING BATHS AND POOLS.

There are no (a) public or (b) privately owned swimming baths within the district.

ERADICATION OF BED BUGS.

- (1) Number of Council Houses found to be infested during the year, 1.
- (2) Number of Private Houses found to be infested during the year, 9.
- (3) The method employed for disinfesting houses is by means of "Zaldecide" as a spray, and Sulphur Dioxide.

Any work, either disinfection or disinfestation is carried out by employees of the Council.

RATS AND MICE (DESTRUCTION) ACT. 1919.

The Scavenging Tips, Salvage Depot, Pegswood Sewerage Works and Lynemouth Pumping Station, have during the year, received the attention of a professional rat catcher who visits periodically. The situation of the tips are:-

Broomhill 2, Widdrington 1; Ulgham 1; Longhirst 1; Pegswood 1; Lynemouth 1; and Longhorsley 1.

The Central Salvage Depot is at Pegswood.

SCHOOLS.

There are 18 schools and all have a sufficient water supply except Cambo where the water from time to time becomes rather scarce.

Ten schools have the water carriage system with a sufficiency of water.

SECTION D.

HOUSING.

Number of Houses erected during the year 1943 -

- (a) By Local Authorities (with State Assistance)Nil.
- (b) By other Bodies or Persons (Unaided)Nil.

HOUSING (RURAL WORKERS) ACTS 1926 and 1931 AND AMENDMENT ACT 1938.

Further repairs and improvements took place as follows:-

West Benridge Farm Cottages.

In four dwellings throughout the district new sinks were provided.

SECTION E.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

MILK SUPPLY.

No. of cowkeepers (registered) in district 84
Approximate number of cows kept 1,725

Attached is set out a comprehensive summary of the results of bacteriological and biological reports of samples of milk displayed in various catergeries. In order to prevent duplication in the taking of samples an exchange of information between the Sanitary Departments of the five constituent authorities respecting sampling has been carried out.

A. Samples of milk produced within the district and taken by the Sanitary Inspectors of the M.R.D.C.

Tuberculin Tested:

1 Sample satisfied the Methylene Blue Test only.

Accredited:

2 Samples satisfied the Methylene Blue Test only.

1 sample failed to pass both Methylene Blue and B.coli tests.

5 samples failed to pass the Methylene Blue test.

Non-accredited or Undesignated:

21 samples satisfied the Methylene Blue test only.

3 samples were found to be contaminated with the Tubercle bacilli.

13 samples failed to pass the Methylene Blue Test.

One cow was slaughtered under the Tuberculosis Order 1938.

B. Samples of milk produced outwith the district, retailed in M.R.D. and taken by the Sanitary Inspectors of the M.R.D.C.

Tuberculin Tested:

1 sample satisfied the Methylene Blue Test only.

1 sample failed to pass the Methylene Blue Test.

Accredited:

1 sample satisfied the Methylene Blue Test only.

2 samples failed to pass the Methylene Blue Test.

Non-accredited or Undesignated:

No sample of this grade of milk was submitted for examination.

- C. Samples of milk produced within the M.R.D. but sampled by Sanitary Inspectors of another L.A. in which the milk was distributed.

Tuberculin Tested:

1 sample satisfied the B. coli test only.
3 samples failed to pass the Methylene Blue Test.

Accredited:

8 samples satisfied the Methylene Blue Test only.
5 samples were found to be contaminated with the tubercle bacilli.
13 samples failed to pass the Methylene Blue Test.

Non-accredited or Undesignated:

1 sample satisfied the B. coli test only.
9 samples satisfied the Methylene Blue Test only.
1 sample failed to pass both tests.
2 samples were found to be contaminated with the tubercle bacilli.
17 samples failed to pass the Methylene Blue Test.

Five cows were slaughtered under the Tuberculosis Order 1938 and in the case of one sample positive for tuberculosis, one cow had been disposed of between the time of sampling and the time of the examination, and as subsequent samples proved negative, this cow was assumed to have been the source of the original contamination.

MEAT AND OTHER FOODS.

In accordance with the Ministry's Circular No.2376 dealing with mutual assistance to be observed by Local Authorities, your inspectors relieved the Meat Inspectors at Bedlington and the Borough of Morpeth during the latters' absence on annual leave.

The following foods were surrendered in the Morpeth R.D. to the Council's Meat Inspectors:-

<u>Unsound Food.</u>	<u>Surrendered.</u>	<u>Seized.</u>
Canned Meat	167½ lbs.	Nil
Canned Fruit and Jam	54¾ lbs.	"
Canned Milk	148 tins.	"
Beef	959 lbs.	"
Bacon	68½ stones	"
Egg Substitute	14¾ dozen pkts.	"

SECTION F.

PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER, INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES.

Hospital accommodation for cases of infectious disease was provided throughout the year at the Ashington Unit of the South East Northumberland Joint Hospital Board, of which the Rural District is a constituent.

Disease.	Total Cases notified.	Cases admitted to Hospital.	Total Deaths.
Scarlet Fever	31	11	-
Diphtheria	6	5	1
Paratyphoid B.fever	1	1	1
Pneumonia	5	Unknown.	6
Puerperal Pyrexia	2	1	-
Cerebro Spinal Fever	1	1	1
Measles	76	-	-
Whooping Cough	11	4	1

TABLE SHOWING ANALYSIS OF NOTIFIED CASES OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES UNDER AGE GROUPS.

Disease.	Under 1 yr.	1-2	2-3	3-4	4-5	5-10	10-15	15-20	20-35	35-45	45-65 & over	Total.
Scarlet Fever	-	-	2	3	3	12	8	1	1	1	-	31
Diphtheria	-	-	-	-	-	3	2	-	1	-	-	6
Paratyphoid B.fever	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Pneumonia	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	1	1	-	1	5
Puerperal Pyrexia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	2
Cerebro Spinal Fever	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Measles	2	6	9	6	10	40	3	-	-	-	-	76
Whooping Cough	3	2	3	-	-	2	-	-	1	-	-	11

Measles.

The number of cases of measles notified during the year was exactly the same as for 1942, i.e. 76. Of these cases all but three occurred in children below the age of 10 years. All cases were treated at home and there were no deaths.

Paratyphoid B.Fever.

One case of paratyphoid B.fever occurred and proved fatal. The source of the infection in this case was never discovered in spite of careful investigation.

Diphtheria.

Six cases of diphtheria were notified and of these 4 were known to have been immunised while two had not been so treated. There was one death which occurred in a child who had been immunised two years previously. A death from diphtheria in an immunised child is an uncommon occurrence, but it does occasionally happen because for some reason the system fails to react to the immunity-producing substances injected. This probably was what happened in this case and moreover the infection was of a very severe type, which might well have overwhelmed any existing small degree of immunity which had been produced by inoculation two years before.

Diphtheria Immunisation.

The diphtheria immunisation campaign was resumed in May, and during this and subsequent months, visits were paid to Tritlington, Red Row and North Broomhill, Lynemouth, Ellington, Pegswood, Stobswood and Widdrington.

The following table shows the immunisation state of the pre-school and school populations at 31st December, 1943.

Under 5 years 72.8%
Between 5 and 15	. 94.3%

The figure for pre-school children shows a very satisfactory increase, as this is the age group most susceptible to diphtheria. The figure for school children was satisfactorily maintained.

During the year 39 children were immunised by general practitioners under the scheme whereby private doctors are paid five shillings for each completed immunisation.

Immunisation of pre-school children is carried out at clinics established by the Welfare Authority, which is the Northumberland County Council.

Anterior and posterior Schick testing are not practised.

Defence (General) Regulations 1939, Scabies Order, 1941, No.33A.

Scabies and other verminous conditions continued to be very prevalent during 1943 and their treatment continued to occupy a large part of the time of your Medical Officers of Health. All cases attending the Clinics were examined for the presence of scabies and head lice.

It will be seen from the table reproduced below that the total number of cases for the whole of the No.2 Area over the year showed a decrease in the categories "Scabies Only" and "Scabies and Lice", but a slight increase in that of "Lice Only", as compared with 1942.

In the Morpeth Rural District there was a decrease in each of the categories "Scabies Only", "Scabies & Lice", and "Lice Only".

Aggregates for the No.2 Area during 1943:-

	<u>Scabies Only</u>		<u>Scabies & Lice.</u>		<u>Lice Only.</u>		<u>Scabies not discovered.</u>	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Over 16 yrs.	179	211	2	75	-	45	43	138
5 - 16 yrs.	248	145	52	138	27	46	70	56
Under 5 yrs.	89	58	14	23	8	3	18	24
	<u>516</u>	<u>414</u>	<u>68</u>	<u>236</u>	<u>35</u>	<u>94</u>	<u>131</u>	<u>218</u>

The above includes the figures for the Rural District which were as follows:-

	<u>Scabies Only</u>		<u>Scabies & Lice.</u>		<u>Lice Only.</u>		<u>Scabies not discovered.</u>	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Over 16 yrs.	14	23	-	7	-	1	2	5
5 - 16 yrs.	30	22	7	11	1	3	11	11
Under 5 yrs.	12	4	2	5	-	-	-	6
	<u>56</u>	<u>49</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>22</u>

During the first three months of 1943 the arrangements for treatment remained exactly as in 1942, except that in January a First Aid Post man who had rendered much arduous and willing service at the Ashington cleansing station was withdrawn owing to his transfer to the Rescue Party. His place was taken by the temporary porter-groundsmen employed by the Hospital Board.

A marked drop in the number of notifications towards the end of March enables the Medical Officer of Health to close the Bedlington Hospital and concentrate the treatment at Ashington. This resulted in a more efficient use of the available staff and also in a saving of fuel.

Cases from Ashington, Bedlington, Newbiggin and parts of the Morpeth Rural District were treated at Ashington and when necessary were transported by Civil Defence ambulance.

Morpeth Borough cases and those from the rest of the Rural District were treated at the Cleansing Station at The Willows, Morpeth, where males were treated by the Lay Superintendent of the First Aid Post, and the females by a nurse who travelled from Ashington.

In July there were no cases treated at Morpeth and in November and December it was again possible to close this unit.

The Ashington Unit was used constantly throughout the year and the work was carried out by a whole-time Civil Defence nurse, the two female scabies orderlies trained in 1942 and the porter-groundsman with assistance, when required, from nurses of the Board's permanent staff.

Cases continued to be notified by the School Medical Officer, School Nurses and Attendance Officers and by the general practitioners.

There was a very sharp rise in the number of cases in September following the re-opening of the schools after the summer holidays, but it was found possible to deal with this without bringing the Bedlington unit into operation again.

Each cleansing station, while in use, was visited twice weekly by your Medical Officers of Health. Clinics were thus held throughout the year every Tuesday and Friday morning at Ashington.

The chief medicament used in the treatment of scabies was 25% Benzyl Benzoate Emulsion with various auxiliary preparations, such as Streptocide Cream, Gentian Violet Cream and Dilute Ammoniated Mercury Ointment where the condition was complicated by the presence of sepsis.

The prevalence of verminous infestations of the head continued to cause much concern to the Medical Officers and staffs of the cleansing stations. In many cases this condition consumed more time before it was eradicated than did the scabetic infestation. This was largely due to lack of co-operation on the part of the sufferers or their parents or guardians.

Many parents appear to regard head lice as a natural consequence of attendance at school, many resented being told that they or their children were so infested and yet made no visible attempt to get rid of the condition. Others again, appeared quite indifferent and much time was spent in attempting to overcome this apathy.

Another factor which occasionally tends to cause continuation of this deplorable state of affairs is the persistence of the belief that infestation is inevitable where there is any co-existing debilitating condition and that is no use trying to do anything in such circumstances.

In cases of severe infestation the only practical method of dealing with the condition is by cropping the hair, but parents are often reluctant to give their consent to such a proceeding.

There is need for further education in personal hygiene, both inside the schools and out of them.

I should like to endorse and to emphasise the remarks made by the Medical Officer of Health in the Annual Report for 1942 concerning the present styles of hair-dressing. It is unfortunate that the present fashion is to wear the hair long and this applies not only to girls but also to boys who frequently have hair much longer than it need be. I would also condemn the present practice which is prevalent, of having the hair of school-girls and adolescent girls "permanently" waved. Many of the worst cases of infestation are seen where hair has been treated in this way. This is due, I believe, to the fact that such hair is likely to be inadequately combed and brushed as the result of a desire to avoid disturbing the "waves".

Parents would do well to discourage this practice among the young people under their care and to realise that short hair and thorough brushing and combing are factors of supreme importance in the avoidance of infestation by head lice.

School children are not the only persons concerned in the state of affairs indicated by the figures given in the table. Many adults are also involved and it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that they are indifferent to personal cleanliness in that they permit the continued existence of head lice.

The insecticide used at the cleansing stations is medicated Lethane hair oil and it has been found very effective in killing the lice but there is difficulty in persuading people to carry out thoroughly the tedious process of removing the nits.

As I have said above there is need for further education in these matters in the schools, in clinics, by posters and film and for an altered style of hair-dressing.

No legal proceedings were instituted under the Defence Regulations, although in several cases action was threatened. This has so far been found sufficient to bring about compliance with the Regulations.

TUBERCULOSIS.

New Cases and Mortality during 1943.

Age Periods.	<u>New Cases.</u>				<u>Total Deaths.</u>			
	Resp.		Non-Resp.		Resp.		Non-Resp.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
5-	1	1	-	2	-	-	-	-
15-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	1
25-	1	1	-	-	-	1	-	-
35-	1	-	-	-	-	2	-	-
45-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
55-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
65 & over	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	6	4	-	4	-	3	-	1

Non-notified Tuberculosis Deaths ...	1
Notified Tuberculosis Deaths	3
Total Tuberculosis Deaths	4

CANCER MORTALITY DURING 1943.

	<u>Males.</u>							<u>Females.</u>						
	20	30	40	45	55	65	Total	20	30	40	45	55	65	Total
Skin	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Stomach	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	1	4	5
Colon	-	-	-	-	3	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	2	2
Rectum	-	-	-	-	1	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Breast	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Pancreas	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	2
Uterus	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	1	3
Gall bladder	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Lung	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bladder	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Oesophagus	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Site not stated	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
	-	-	-	-	4	6	10	-	1	1	2	3	9	16

